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Documenting the elaboration of a fresco painting “Aldeia viva” (Aldeia de dinâmica social / on the visual economy of rural social dynamics)” in the Casa da Caldeira (at Correias/Rio Maior, Ribatejo, Portugal) 3rd – 28th April 2013

Technical data

Public mural intervention no. 132 of Free Fresco Academy

Participants:

In the planning and decision process:
Masha, Anna-Maria, Virgílio, Martin

Pictorial research, decisions defining figurative and colour dynamics: Masha, Martin

Manual execution: fresco painting by Martin, last touch in casein: Oktobrinka

Surface of final fresco:

Painting day-shift no.	Date of accomplishment	Square metres
1	19.IV.2013	3,61
2	22.IV.	4,96
3	24.IV.	4,35
4	26.IV.	3,61
5	27.IV.	4,92
6	28.IV.	3,82
	total surface:	25,27

Materials used:

from 9.IV.2013 onwards, the moment of accomplishing to clean acrylic moisture blockers from the surface, the wall has been kept in full range moisture regime in about 45 sprinkling sessions (2 to 7 per

day) with about 2 m³ metres of water altogether

first and second lime layer to fill extensive holes in the surface up to 8 cm in depth: 0,8 ton of gravel mixed with sands of various diameters + 200 kg hydrated lime (calcium oxide watered on 12.IV.2013)

the second layer has been marked with ultramarine pigment in lime solution (no casein to avoid migration of casein finish to velo surfaces, for the overall lime body remained highly wet and uncarbonated during the whole preparation process) to delimit the plastering task of the second last layer for each day-shift respectively plus 4 cm

Second last layer (stucco): 200 kg of fluvial sand from Rio Maior, particles not too round, mixed sizes of diameters under 3 mm, silicate colours: black and cold grey + 44 kg of hydrated lime $\text{Ca}(\text{OH})_2 \times \text{X H}_2\text{O}$ (calcium oxide $[\text{CaO}]$ watered on 12.IV.2013 for day-shift 3 to 6 mixed with oxide watered on 22.IV.2013)

The second last plastering layer has been marked with the traditional medieval mural sketching pigment “bolo rosso” applied in simple lime solution (without casein) on the precise borderline of the following day-shift (accuracy of pre-planning 0,5 cm)

Last layer (velo, the sail): 80 kg of deposit sand with traces of strongly yellowish clay (natural Yellow Iron oxide, Fe_xO_x), after trial fresco utilised unwashed (to preserve a prima effect of natural colouring) + 20 kg of hydrated lime (calcium oxide watered in spring 2012, with later day-shifts profiting from layers up to several years older)

The pigments used on the last layer after superficial calcification (on average after 12 hours after plastering) have been limited to 4 experimentally following suggestions by Sickert on oil painting colour dynamics.

Cold dark: 140 g Terra di Cipro, natura fredda, excellently thinning out in highly transparent hues, earth pigment labelled by the trader (Kremer, Hauptstr. 41-47, D-88317 Aichstetten) as “no. 0720 Umbra gebrannt schwarzbraun, cyprisch”

Warm very light: 70 g Terra di Sienna natural (Kremer no. 40400) highly transparent, i.e. of very light particle weight, , thus difficult to access in concentrated form at the bottom of its water solution, earth pigment

Very warm light: 80 g orange iron oxide, mineral pigment, heavy particle composition, highly covering, difficult to keep in watery solution, labelled by the trader (Kremer) as “no. 48060 Eisenoxidorange 960”

Coldest dark: 200 g Ultramarine blue, mineral pigment, strongest graphical ability to create special effects in weak solution received as a present from Bauhof community in Herleshausen, procured from traders in the South of France, most probably of German chemical industry production

Pigments have been dissolved in overall 3 litres of strongly calcinated water ($\text{Ca}(\text{COH})_2 \times \text{XH}_2\text{O}$), allowing to carbonise even “pastose”_ brush strokes of concentrated pigments up to a millimetre, “pastose”_ mud of Hydrated lime in high concentration (water content lower than 50 %) has been used to height certain spots above the luminance of the velo or, in a more

All pigments employed can be characterised as highly transparent, though they characteristically concentrate to highly dense, covering hues when the ratio of pigment to calcinated water is augmented above 1.

Time of work needed, including modelling, drafting and clean-up: five full working weeks plus weekends respectively, slightly more than 300 working hours

Register of animals, figures and related objects shown in the picture

(see schematic overview drawing, picture with 194 points of reference)

A. flying macaque

B. white cat

C. gay spring cow

D. African spider

E. little river lobster

F. left draught ox

G. right drought ox

H. fly

I. chameleon

1. Photis (friend of Lucien)

1. a) saucepan

2. morose monk

2. a) monk's frock

2. b) prayer pearls, a broken chain

2. c) Dominican's belt

3. Diego Mason, the Romanic conspirator

3. a) a book by Martin Kraemer Liehn: „Revolutionary Collectives“, Warszawa 2008,

available on
www.archive.org/details/revolutionaryCollectives

3. b) Neolithic scull of a worshipper of the sun

4. curious kid

4. a) cosmic baseball cap protecting from immediate fall-out

5. la bruxa

6. old climbing artist

6. a) black glove

6. b) ballet shoes (compare 52 e) and 52 f))

7. young climbing artist

7. a) hitch-hiking thumb

8. Rapunzel (Grimm's fairy tales), saves people from bad food with her healthy long hair advocating organic farming

8. a) BLACK hair (no blond hair, the main source for Grimm's fairy tales was a Huguenot immigrant from France)

9. the ancient shepherd mariner of Portugal's North („the ancient mariner“ travelling to Antarctica in British opium poetry)

9. a) sails of a great sailor seen from the very top down to deck and sea

9. b) ladders for sailors to climb seen from top of the ship down

9. c) black covers on the sails to hide the red Portuguese seafarers Roman-catholic cross while pirating rival vessels

9. d) top of the mast platform, look-out, one of three

9. e) steering wheel for sailing ship, not hold by captain (upper class, sown in his cabin because wind is getting stronger) instead hold by the fist mate, lower class formerly a

shepherd from the North working in Ribatejo... or dreaming about such a career on an evening while serving on a hill above Correias 1857

10. spinning shepherd, telling stories, using his free hands to fulfil women's tasks

10. a) wool to be spun

11. shepherd clown (all shepherds 9, 10, 11, 12 and 34 in straw clothing from Portugal's north)

11. a) fire but nothing to roast (there will be vegetarian chicken served, see 19. b)

12. woman shepherd telling tales with sharp morals

13. Mr P. getting sufficiently drunk on red wine at the age of 6 to become a wise man: so today the wine reservoir are and remain empty

13. a) barrel of wine

13. b) olive tree above the valley of Correias in 1917

13. c) first champagne glass held to relief boy from drinking fit

13. d) second glass

13. e) third glass

14. holder of the pomegranate

14. a) pomegranate

14. b) glass plate on column or fruits of the adjacent gardens

14. c) plate of my childhood, I was first able to appreciate its factual gesture of out-reaching hospitality in Stuttgart 1974

14. d) another pomegranate

14. e) kiwi from the home garden nearby

14. f) tomato grown and ripened nearby

15. dame d'honneurs

15. a) pommel

15. b) grapes not for cortiçada hotels

15. c) red orange little fruits with hard kernel, sweet and soft, very popular with kids, local, documented already in Arab times

16. young Indian

16. a) plait of hair

17. Colonel advocating to better become a doctor

17. a) no place on the table for Super Bock

17. b) a colonel... but maybe he'll manage to finish studies

18. Vladimir the king of lobsters (not respecting equally of women and men at work and having to face the consequences), keeping his beard like his brother in surname, our nice teacher: Vladimir Illich Uljanov, also called „L.“

18. a) the forc he used in the river for catching lobsters when he does so himself

18. b) in the right hand a screw driver (for the opening the lobster)

18. c) his Soviet watch shows one minute past five (pm.): lobster time

18. d) left button to hold his old-fashioned trousers

18. e) right button to hold his old-fashioned trousers

18. f) back of the simple seat he has become accustomed to in Correias exile

19. a woman from Alentejo heated from emptying the oven, she says at the same time „vegan chicken ready, who wants to be first served“ and „We heard you say, Vladimir,

there is working tasks for 'Woman only'. How courageous of you to say such things under our watch, so here you are 'TOMA'!“

19. a) shovel of wood for getting bread (or little lobsters) out of the oven

19. b) vegan organic chicken of soy glee meat imitation, the bones are said to be of plastic (even if you detest capitalist mass chicken farming: better do not play football with this well-meant work of art as in at the Wiesenhof Schachtereie besetzung near Lüneburg in summer 2010)

19. c) Alentejo field workers' head

19. d) neat and tiny traditional buttoning making erotic seduction during and after work possible only for very patient womenfolk

19. e) the missing item

19. f) the museum work dress is rather an evening dress, on the stereotypes of tradiditonal life in puppet reconstruction

19. g) very neat shoes, executed in one go, which meant a special shift of the border between 4th and 6th day shift

20. dark sailor, pulling up the next barrel

20. a) a cord to pull up the ne3xt barrel once Mr. 13 has finished the first one

21. towing sailor

22. blond sailor with black features pulling, stemming his feet against 22. a)

22. a) the sailing ship's side board

23. sailor pulling up and shouting hello

24. small boat's cheerful skipper

24. a) rowing oar used as a steering ruder but now stuck into the air to show the crew on deck in which direction to pull the barrel

24. b) rowing boat to deliver freight to bigger sailing ships on anchor in front of the harbour

25. small boat luggage fixer

25. a) the second barrel to re-lance the delicately balances first one

26. small boat rowing woman

26. a) rowing bench, one of three

26. b) left rowing oar stemmed by a strong lady

26. c) right rowing oar stemmed by a strong lady

27. black sailor pulling

27. a) left pulling rope for the new barrel

28. supporting sailor

29. sailor pulling up

30. sailor in the shadow

31. Mathilda, an American revolutionary of our times

31. a) cornerstone of a Ribatejo valley mansion of classical dimensions and tastes, the latifundial grandeur of reckless proportions

31. b) Mexican pyramid: where all modern social fresco painting has descended from, see the romantic conspirator Diego R. Featuring as personage no. 3

31. c) Traditional grape harvesting in Ribatejo: work for many to the benefit of the very few who are affluent enough to get more affluent by agriculture

31. d) wooden barrel mounted on wooden wheels to be drawn by two draught oxen (animals F and G)

31. e) lost item

32. Marianne, l'égalité tiens la ligne

32. a) the rope holding the whole weight of the first barrel

32. b) horizontal wooden crane to hold the barrel

32. c) upper big wheel to redirect the rope from vertical to figure no. 32

32. d) lower, smaller rope to cut weight to pull in half and mount metres to pull to twice as much

32. e) lower correspondence of 32. d

32. f) lower correspondence of 32. c

32. g) heavyweight hand crane hook, masterpiece of a local blacksmith in the 19th century

32. h) wooden wheel of a traditional Ribatejo grape cart

32. i) connection between the axle and the wooden wheel, a neuralgic point to be secured by canopy cords, tightly fastened

32. j) the corresponding hole in the wooden wheel reinforcing the connection between axis and wheel with canopy cords, see 33. i

33. Ribatejo shepherd, medieval social relations create medieval stiffness

33. a) stick for cattle driving

33. b) nail end for communicating with big cattle through thick skin

33. c) traditional Ribatejo macho's head (do not dare to market a logotype without this stereotype), appropriated by a female game keeper in this case

33. d) gauntlet, somehow the medieval stagnation of the region drives people to move as if in steel gauntlets from the times of the Conquista

33. e) a purse, do not think game driers worked for free just to make Ribatejo so typical

34. shepherd from Portugal's north

34. a) glass of water (from the farm's tab)

34. b) wooden spoon brought from Portugal's North

34. c) felt head

34. d) straw apparel for keeping the rain off and any expenses out of the family economy

34. e) flowers for the drought oxen, for a feast of harvesting grapes

35. the collector of bolinhos

35. a) handkerchief

35. b) knot in the handkerchief

35. c) little cestinho de bolinhos

35. d) bigger cestinho de bolinhos

36. chimney cleaning assistant boy

37. little Tommy pulling over the only soup, testing the straw clothing of his neighbour, 34

37. a) yellow vegetable soup

38. young prize boxer

38. a) woollen shorts to hide the nappies underneath

39. eyes like lighthouses (occhi como fari)

40. Feliks Tych, saved from Warszawa 1944

40. a) white wool above nappies

40. b) works of Julian Marchlewski, later in life to be thrown away without further ado

41. amateur acrobat of 1899

41. a) acrobat's tricot

41. b) acrobat's moustache

41. c) acrobat's right leg

41. d) acrobat's left leg

42. English hippie in Indian Sari

42. a) Indian kilt

42. b) bolinhos' basket

42. c) bolinhos (he will eat the next one himself)

43. „come play with us!“

43. a) the children's table for the feast

44. Mr. Scharf of Richiş, Romania, born 1915, giving a toast on his sour white wine nobody else drinks except for him

44. q) taking sour water for wine

45. skateboarding grandma

45. a) a skate-board

45. b) a cup with verbena infusion (warming and refreshing up to the shoulder, Oktobrinka's casein intervention)

45. c) speed effects from skateboarding to the table

46. the young Mr. Teleshov, son of a well meaning mother with alcohol problems, father disappeared, raised on a glass of water with sugar a day in a Kiev working class neighbourhood (his neighbour sometimes gives him a bread, she distils poppy straw in her flat and needs collaborating neighbours

46. a) a third wooden closing mechanism in the room

47. a Christmas carol singer, temporarily not left hungry after two centuries

47. a) bolinho

48. „I have eaten no more bolinhos than you“
(double to be precise)

49. Anna Smirnova's ideal, born 1968 in
Moscow, dreaming about joining a monastery
after her next big love affair, getting the last
wine from a reservoir which is all but empty

49. a) tap where the other holes are closed on
the two reservoirs to the right

49. b) a ceramic jug

49. c) the metal fixer for securing the reservoir
opening (compare real historic examples to
the right)

50. the telegram sender has come in person
with an ocean steamer from Belém do Pará,
due to jet lag he has a rest among the
cheering kids' crowd

50. a) pillow for resting (power nap before the
chicken gets served)

50. b) obligatory moustache

50. c) white collar

50. d) between the collar ends a shadow
element

50. e) his shoulder

50. f) his belly under a white shirt

51. teasing grandma from Amazonia about her
Indian descen (mixing north American and
Amazonian indian accounts)

51. a) woolen shorts with nappies inside

51. b) right North American Indian feather
hold up by right hand to mock the
grandmother from Amazonia

51. c) left North American Indian feather hold
up by right hand to mock the grandmother
from Amazonia

52. Virgílio's mother in ballet shoes

52. a) bolinho with almond on offer for
incoming guests who take to the stairs up for
the table

52. b) basket with more

52. c) carnival collar

52. d) carnival dress

52. e) right ballet shoe

52. f) left ballet shoe

53. Avietta has finally learnt to read
Portuguese and rejoices at the out-dated
absurdity of the supposedly rhetorical
question, She could get it as a pragmatic
question and do a better fresco son (her first
efforts have been plastered over some
centimetres underneath, the next Lisbon
earthquake might bring them to light and their
fate to justice)

53. a) the telegram, reading: „sender: post
office Belém do Pará [Amazonian Atlantic port
town], stamped 24.10.1917, Dear daughter,
girls should not study Fine Arts. What can a
picture tell if dreaming is unbound and is
written down in cords of poetry?“ meant as a
rhetorical question to be answered with
„nothing“, can be taken as a practical one
instead.

54. the aim of all spotlights, the extravagant
and fly-catching ever-unrepentant student of
the art of life, no matter what Amazonia
chooses to comment and not understand

54. a) pair of cherries

54. b) extravagant Brazilian diamonds on a
chain

54. c) silk glove reaching over the elbows

54. d) feather boa

54. e) locks fashioned to suggest evening
toilette

54. f) lips red from cherry juice

54. g) cherries to decorate her left ear, coming from Brazil she initially did not know that these berries can be eaten and used them for decoration purposes

54. h) holding the chameleon's leash (the chameleon might be of porcelain)

Description of the setting, the process and the dynamics of step-by-step results in fresco painting (by Martin)

Masha, Oktobrinka and me had a long-standing invitation to return to Casa da Caldeira dating back to our previous visit on 26th December of the previous year. Our dream was to paint a series of oil studies on canvas of the surrounding mountain ridge. We had been living in the agricultural plain of the eastern Tejo valley for a third of a year. To see the horizon rise so close in front of us with a theatre of hills was like rediscovering that the earth is not flat but round. Crossing the Tejo meant also venturing into what amounts almost to a different country, leaving the perimeter of Alentejo extensive agriculture and its strong social movement of the past centuries entering into the small-scaled and intensely cultivated, socially fragmented dynamic of the north of today's Portugal. Of course both social dynamics infringe on each other in the border region of Ribatejo which makes differences more plastic to study. So, the sensual and social understanding of the rural spaces hosting us first south, then north of the Tejo intertwined as well. Consecutively, our efforts of coming to terms with landscape, space, social dynamics, friendships and polarisations in the current crisis afflicted to the Portuguese countryside materialised

in two monumental wall paintings, in the feira da exposição of Alpiarça and the Casa da Caldeira of Correias respectively.

We had departed from Putivl', south of Moscow at the end of September 2012 with the explicit aim to paint a fresco painting against the current regime of austerity in Portugal. Human conditioning to the caprices of capital accumulation means austerity, fresco painting means luxury of space, time and colours, forms and social interaction, we assumed. In our view from the distant East fresco is the embodiment of non-commercial non-commoditised visual synthesis and a suitable technique to be re-exported to the Mediterranean world from our east Ukrainian workshops of drawing and limestone layering.

As it turned out, the pleasures and qualities of fresco painting were not conveyable in the tense political set-up of local politics of the public sphere in present-day Alpiarça, only months before a new local election cycle. Consequently, we found ourselves stuck into a secco painting, layering tempera on an unresponsive industrial acrylic paint of concrete blocks. The size of the object consigned to us (500 square metres) could hardly compensate for the lack in technical conditions for full-range mural expressivity. So, we resigned of much of our baroque intentions to paint frugality and anti-austerity for the Alpiarça mural. In documenting the process after a third of a year, we acutely felt the deficit in realisations in relation to our dreams and sort-of-professional longing for realisation. We were decided to leave the country in a few days with a two or three days stop over at Correias. As expected, we were again struck by the three-dimensionality of the village landscape literally descending

onto us and our comprehension. But somehow the series of drawings and oil paintings, though quite carefully and consistently planned for did not match with the intensity of our sensation of having left the plains for the mountains. This contradiction was heightened by the simple and practical hospitality of the inhabitants of Casa da Caldeira. So we prolonged our sojourn. Still very much influenced by the reserve of the socialising rural south against the presumably socially atomised rural north, we evolved a more precise understanding in the course of the following months. Of course every understanding includes a misunderstanding of its own sort and both grow consecutively feeding on each other. So there is no finality or ambition of passing judgement, just the intention to sketch a fluent state in a broader evolvment of our necessarily imperfect social and historical understanding of the current social conflicts and dynamics in Portugal.

Quite funnily, the degree of wage labour in agriculture, the importance of motorisation of transport in the efforts to individualise preliminary processing and distribution of food, in the cases most popular with us organic food are quite similar in Alpiarça and Correias. Yet, the supposedly conservative North was somehow so much more hospitable and enhancing than the by declaration more progressive and internationalist south. In Alpiarça we were at the disposal and mercy of an all-encompassing, all-regulating and in some respects all-mighty Marxist-Leninist Communist Party (PCP). They did not mean to well for us and we did our best not to be affected too much, at least in our painting, by the reign of institutional formality and impersonal treatment. In Correias everything turned out so much more simple. We were guests of what can be described an extended family of proprietors of the premises and associates

in wage labour relation. Every communist farmer-entrepreneur in Alpiarça has such a multigenerational cash-crop producing social pyramid of a proprietor of the lands and some 5 wage workers. The relations go over decades and encompass most sheres of life. Yet, while Alpiarça had the air of a Midwest entrepreneurial failure in bad-lands (yet the most fertile of the country in agro-technical terms), our surrounding in Correias breathed the cosmopolitan and spookily patriarchal air of grandeur we do know so distinctly from Russian writers like Čehov, even those depicted by Tolstoj and Turgenev and Levitan, Serov, Venetianov on the pictorial side of the vanished isle. Two settings materially so closed and thrown together in the current national crisis regime, yet so different in the inspiration they convey.

The social richness and capacity for empathy and compassion does not follow mechanically out of the discernible current material setting we succeed in perceiving, but out of a fond of multi-generational experience. Class divides and Class conflicts are paramount to those experiences, but they leave their imprint in so complex and multi-layered ways that we hardly grasp the real possible gain in establishing classless social relations of co-operation and situational gift economies when getting obsessed with static divisions. Divisions are dynamic and they can be understood only by progressing, by mixing with the material processes under way and practically testing the responsive qualities and powers of the social tissues of solidarity in action under our strangers' eyes but hardly noticeable by our coarse and schematic evolution of concepts and categories for understanding our possible social agency. And yet, we do not existentialise our being strangers here and now. We are equally strangers where we were said to be born "to", where others locate us to "be at home" or similar intentional delusions. Our

being strangers is a precondition for working in every accessible social situation as if it were the only place we accumulated experience and skills for in all previous settings preceding. This realisation, ripening in April 2013 at Correias, gets already very close to the compositional basic plot inspiring the fresco in the exposition site and festive hall of Casa de Caldeira.

Oil paintings can be evacuated, murals cannot. Oil paintings need a little special hospitality. Murals need a certain lifelong hospitality, no matter how low-key. When hospitality for it ends, the mural ends its existence. So the premises' holders are the anchor points of any such pictorial construction. I am not arguing for painting in commission mode or painting to please someone. All this client-servant role game of the bourgeois époque is by now pretty much nullified and sadly out for grabs by the successive collapses and remakes of mass production cycles. Real innovative conceptual painting is already made of a new social substance, akin to gift economies of past ages and the one ahead we hardly know how to describe yet, let alone effectively fight for against its real adversaries all around its humble beginnings.

When oil and tempera painting cannot satisfy the expectations for visual gifts (painters rarely make good gifts to anybody, they just make gifts, mainly to the frolicking pleasure of their own eyes and dreams, but that need not at all be separated from social interaction in a slightly more wider sense) the only intensification of pictorial expressivity is fresco layering, limestone-based aquarelle washes, at least the Italian schools, Egyptian antiquity an Maya culture, medieval and baroque Europe joint by Mexican social revolutionaries of the 20th

century could not see anything better. So we follow their advice and example.

More interesting and specific in this realisation than the technical implications of such a choice is the personality of the hosts to our effort. Anna-Maria and Virgílio are both pedagogical professionals by vocation and by commitment. It was enough for me to hear them talk softly and mildly unrelenting with their grown-up daughter, Maria who is back from life in the capital on some week-ends to grasp that being a teacher of professional training and debut in the late 1970s in Portugal is a life-long passion. It is not something you lose in any way retiring or eventual leaving a school building for good. We got to know Virgílio as a humble and well-informed vendor of the agricultural organic produce of his farm. In conversations over half a year he would not once mention his sort-of aristocratic descent, heir of a veritable castle standing (in hidden ruins now) on an impressive hill for most of the past thousand years. Nothing of that can be heard in his talk. He would rather take off his cap humbly and argue that he is undeniably a Portuguese Arab, his ancestors somehow conquered and turned into an underclass by the medieval conquest from the north. We cannot discern exactly. What we do know from written sources is that from the beginning of church records the name of his family is inscribed into the feudal order of landscape cultivation in this manifold mountainous region of central Portugal. What most stroke me in his communication is the project to propagate organic and labour-intensive land-use with fruit-trees valorising irrigation schemes and water resources in use since Arab times in a most charming valley of his abounding in sheer miraculous vegetative fertility, mostly sylvatic, with “playfully pedagogic” means. He invites school

classes and organic farmers and he can show an almost park-like intense cultivation of the complex three-dimensional landscape to them. From the modestly fashioned farmstead bowing underneath the little village of Correias stretching down to its small river we can walk under a palisade roof of living wine. To the left and right are ancient fruits, from such banal and commonly known ones as apples and pears to a so-called European nespoli_ and related plantas incógnitas which Masha with her rich late-Soviet gardening background finds rather uncanny to eat.

When you cross the river and climb the steep adjacent hillsides, you can oversee the farmstead. There are more central and more impressive houses in the little village. It goes without saying that the owners of these ancient building sites alongside with the builders of a baroque palace in nearby Tremês are somehow Virgílio's cousins and after touring the smaller surrounding region with him, it actually seems rather difficult to be of any landed property or premises and NOT be Virgílio's cousin in this area of the country. Of all this cousinship, Casa da Caldeira is rather of the more humble abodes. That seems the result of a conscious choice. Virgílio would not mind a scratch on the car he will use the forthcoming years, nor an unarranged mess of out-dated tools lying around in sheds, but the organic apple collection in his shop will be of local making until high summer months, always up to date and he always willing to document its value for biodiversity to any ignorant visitor of any sort. Fitting humbly in with Portugal's liberal understanding of democracy and commercial cosmopolitanism Virgílio most likes to set himself as a humble and precisely calculating merchant of good products.

Anna-Maria, also a retired teacher, has moved in from further up north, an

intensely gardening household of an extended, intellectually ambitious family at the outskirts of Coimbra. Here a never mentioned Portuguese aristocratic stance is not of a landed property sense but of a clearly literal accomplishment over generations. Both her mother and father were passionate writer/translators with her father getting the fame (Mário Braga) for their joint immense work of decades and her mother getting a divorce in the end. But that's nothing to stumble over in the deeply secularised making of Portuguese culture, solidified in its practical a-Catholicism in centuries of alliance and capital mergers with British modes of accumulation. In fact, the legacy of Anna-Maria's background is just as rich as the castle holders of the most beautiful valley. It draws from multi-generational intercontinental experiences from family migration to Amazonia and back, colonial service via Goa, Macao to East Timor, decade-long public functions in pre-1974 Angola and relatives in its capital to the present day and most important a grand-parent from Madeira, descendant of humble fishermen with a persistent passion to cultivate every inch of arable garden land with para-scientific measurements and the discipline of islanders off the African coast, visited by hundreds of international vessels every season over centuries for their export vines.

All this would be pretty inaccessible for us strangers and we would (a mistake) rather not care to access this fulminant memory bank of a cosmopolitan Portuguese making. I have been living a decade in Poland, yet never succeeded and never really cared to succeed in accessing the sphere of the Cracovian suburbia legacy of autonomy in the Austrian empire, yet Kraków is the Coimbra of Portugal. Kraków is the burying-place of Poland's dictator of the May 1926 coup-d'état and Coimbra the University site giving the

necessary contacts to its dictator and has much ado in the making of Portugal's May 1926 coup-d'état as well as in opposing the 48 year nightmare of his grip on the country. Kraków suburbs have made possible the literary production of the painter Wispianski (wesele) and Coimbra and its surrounding landscape is in no way in this Roman-catholic periphery of emancipatory aspirations parallel to the opus dei headquarters erected against them.

What made this landscape accessible and slightly more understandable if not in the Polish then in the Portuguese case was – if we look at a very queer angle from the former soviet union on this waterside of the Atlantic – the coincidence that both Anna-Maria and Virgílio found themselves drawn into one of the most vibrant popular uprisings of the last half-century in Europe, the Portuguese April 1974. They both finished their studies and started their pedagogical trail after this event changing the country and changing the prospects of Europe for a while. Well-noted, basic reforms in the educational sector were started, some say simulated by late Salazarism some years before 1974. Of all sectors under Marceline_ neo-fascist and pro-European community streamlining, Portuguese education was the only sector where the process was not reversed again by the old nomenclature. Yet the popular break-through of 1974 opened a completely different dimension of democratising education, far beyond what European liberal association could promise.

Interestingly, in this glimpse of understanding we had, why we could be welcome in Casa da Caldeira for more than a month when coming for a couple of days only, is a certain sense of finality. This window opening on a world we were

delighted to discover, its empowering force of sharing space and dialogue on the forming of a fresco across current wealth and class divides was in our view opened for a surprisingly long-term after the failure of the April 1974 revolution. It will rather be closed in the foreseeable future, we sense. Virgílio would rather refute such an explanation altogether, he has a soundly critical distance to the 1974 events; even to their anti-religious actions like freeing the Arab irrigation well of his rocky valley from a Christian conquerors Marianist cult figure back 40 years. He is still cross about that. At the same time, he is, as expected of a school principal after a revolution, no matter how early aborted in its social programmatic, definitely loyal to the aquis of 1974. Anna-Maria is of a discernibly more leftist back-ground already and her and her sister's book-collection of the post 1974-years, some of them procured through fantastic self-managed co-operatives in post-revolutionary Coimbra, tells of a possibility to move for out into radical left agency, not dreamt of by her father who just flirted with the Communist international as so many isolated intellectual in internal exile enforced by Romanic fascisms from Bucureşti to Rome, Madrid and Havana in the late 1930s and following decades. Characteristically, this lasted not longer than 1968, when reporting from Prague convinced to be able to illustrate some more details of its later development. The library of the Braga sisters, Anna-Maria and Isabel shows a strong Third-worldist current, as always in Portuguese visions during the last half millennium a strong influx of Brazilian influences (Boal, Freire). Nicaragua was so important when Portugal lost its agency to German trade unions and party-fostering and Brussels technocrats in the late 1970s.

All this was heavily on my mind, reading from 4 in the morning, hundreds of pages of Portuguese in those first days of April, when I began drawing oil sketches on fish packaging in scale for the canvases made ready (1:10, then 1: 3,16, then 1:1).

I happened to look down the hall we had situatively squatted with our luggage excess, the travelling painters' workshop who had up to then be able to paint so little in relation to their plans for Portugal (just 500 square metres(-:). The perfectly whitewashed wall in the depth of the spacious agricultural building under an historic open wooden carpentry supporting a warmly-coloured roof was flashing in my mind and turning into the reproduction of a rather clumsy Austrian clay painting with fainting colours, I had once seen in a Kreidezeit documentation. Maybe this illustrates how important it is for theatre workers to see theatre pieces even if they expressively dislike their making and mural painters to see lots of special solutions to most various architectural endeavours, even if the painting itself is nothing but convincing. The influence was slightly more than just negation, or the just too arrogant, I can do better, guess they will not put our work in their catalogue (they are reserved though we have painted with their colours and some of their advice for 23 years in well over 100 sites) and get this Austrian patriarchal crap instead, while they do not even manage to scale the colour intensity and get lost in blurs and allusions of cow warmth of something wishy-washy of that sort. Yet this cow-craft of pictomaniac Austrian intensity was somehow more persuasive in dimensions, I did not grasp in that instant. It is so simplifying to speak about negation as a clear-cut business. What you let come close to you will influence you, make you love it and haunt you ultimately. That's the tragic of so many people seemingly to them forced to succumb to coercive labour relations: they end up loving their bosses,

what a horror. We do have to live the consequences of this mass deception even if we struggle to keep free of this miscarriage of materialist insight ourselves for some precious years accumulating a debt the now dominant system will teach us to take serious and to be worked off later in even more unfavourable conditions to come forth.

Now, I did what I got used to do when I am confused. I said to myself, this is a joke and while the others are still asleep I will patiently elaborate a series of 5 times 2 sketches on a 1:100 and 1:31,62 scale respectively. I quickly measured the area with the help of some trigonometric shortcuts and later found indeed that errors were just committed in overestimating the total height by some 4 per cent above the actual 5,40. As we cannot fly, height is always more important than width and 1:1 representation on flat paper if not put up horizontally is a potential source of fatal misunderstanding on the spatiality of a future mural site. So, on the one hand I was lucky to get the subjective proportions more realistically. On the other hand, I thus was late in discovering the perfect square body of graphical reference, which was shaped by a building master highly conscious of proportions for this economic side building of a past century.

Curiously enough the vision I had was referring to the Austrian clay fresco mixed technique mess more than to the actual width of the space in front of me. Yet, I had carefully glued the best drawing paper I ever found (colour tone Havana) on harder cardboard with blue technical lines on it for accounting purposes. This allowed drawing with darker tones and white tones of different warmth and most dynamic greyscale value changes in impulsive movements. The result was very funny. Some variations were explicitly set out to make fun of my early morning

frescomania, like a giant face reminding of the Goya painting to the »Hui clos« of his private retreat, the so-called Madrilenian "Casa do surdo", probably the first secular fresco whatsoever on Iberian soil if we dispute late Roman imperial secularity.

As in many cases before, all 5 sketches later turned out to be of high relevance, no single idea was refuted in the end, though the selection process created the illusion for all involved including me that we had "made a common choice". As a matter of fact the face was the good-father of the bold giant circles. For the first two days, I shared the flirt with the funny idea of making the long-longed for fresco just here only with Masha (and Oktobrinka (-:)). Masha warned me to make it known to the landlords, because this would, according to Russian understandings of social etiquette oblige them to consent. After hearing the story of a trip to East Timor, I added the ship sketch for the fun of the dynamics. All this had a playful character. I was seriously proceeding with the sketches preparing the oil paintings of the front landscape, though there was persistent rain these days, luckily slowing down plein-air realisation and making us realise how happy we were in the conditions we had planned just to touch down upon for some hasty hours before rushing through Europe with our excessive luggage. It was just when I advanced with the big canvas (60x90 cm_) that I noticed the longing for light painting which was realised in oil in the first hand sketch. Now, I sensed intuitively that reworking this first improvised graphic compilation in colour deposits of seemingly rather accidental structure would take away the freshness of the painting. It would create a sticky oily tapestry (die Ölpest) without being able to compensate for the loss in freshness. This impression set the scene for the collective

decision making to go for what had initially been but a thought experiment.

The preparatory decisions

Participatory preparation

The main argument for executing a fresco was to use it as a means of adding the characteristic dynamics paramount to village craft(wo)manship to the exposition of tools and manual machines arranged in the historic wine workshop. The spacious hall with 15 metres length and 5,40 rooftop height is characterised by remarkable musical acoustics for its emptiness and basically shoebox proportion outline (no opera hall design in the world has reached the shoe box in acoustic quality yet). At the meantime, natural light enters randomly and sparsely through two double windows to the north east, each of 07 square metres, two times 8 glass brick elements each of 0,04 square metres on the opposing south west side, yet their light intake being shaded from the fresco surface by the wine reservoir cubes and a glass door system in 6 parts with 6 square metres of glass surface on the north east side but at a distance of more than 10 metres from the fresco surface.

In the first discussions already, the dynamic input agreed upon was to be based on figurative elements and action taken by them, work situations and a resting base for viewer empathy in the form of an open, inviting table, a feast in progress celebrating the fruit of agricultural labour.

For a week the execution was in suspension. The sketches had been

presented. Virgílio and Anna-Maria had opted for project number one of five. Yet, no point of material decision to go ahead was reached. During this time I banged against the wall and got a profound shock. I told Masha, that the preceding construction worker was a unparalleled concrete fetishist and he worked probably with about two and a half times the optimal cement concentration in silicate for the entire plastering work. Masha advised clearly to drop the project. That was reasonable given that we had previewed some 4 or five working days for execution.

In the preparation of the 5th day shift, when a certain juxtaposition of working figures and feasting figures at the table became apparent and a certain ironic note from the bottom figures of day-shift number 4 seasoned the overall tendency Anna-Maria made a remark which could be understood as a critique or a more imploring suggestion than the common enhancement to just go on as pleases. She said: "its becoming a bourgeois feast now". I answered with a superficial reply that there is one shepherd invited to the table. Later, I realised that he has nothing on his plate and only water in his glass. I wanted the table to have free space, not be overloaded with goods in supermarket fashion. There should be a moment of suspense: the meal will just be served: the viewer who just entered the hall has not come too late, does not disturb the company but is just one of the people expected to occupy the open places, who came in just in time. Now, with Anna-Maria's remark in mind this became a one-sided tendency to guide interpretations I definitely did not want. Of course, class relations of rural Portugal in past and present have their imprint on food accessibility and it was all right to document that some were working while others eating (a phenomena also akin to

the soviet SovHoz model as people had the reliability to be planned for in three working shifts). I definitely did not want the moralising or ironic note to become paramount and throw out other layers of meaning. Thus I took three counter-measures to balance the impression helpfully conveyed by Anna-Maria. There was a back-lash making a strict dichotomy work-feast even worse if I embellished the divide with various means put to our disposition by aesthetic convention. That would have anthropologised the present and extreme past forms of class divide to a kind of aesthetical apologetic setting: ones are just there to labour, others to enjoy their fruits. As soon as this dichotomy gets into the current of being existentialised or aestheticized, the fresco would loose its intended multi-layered transparency, hosting lines of interpretation not yet known to us in the years to come.

A good fresco on immobile base should offer an elaborate landscape for exploration by foot. As soon as we plan and level highways of interpretation through the material proposed, the fixed character of the picture acquires a tyrannical note which is not in keeping with the subtlety of the technique employed. I thus took to the following four emergency measures:

1. I skipped the table contrary to Italian renaissance doctrine to have the viewer gain a top view of it. The Italian example up to Diego Rivera in San Francisco was to put the focal point of flight lines on the level of the average observer's eyes. Putting this point in the centre of the image makes the view fly into the picture as an equal, inviting to participate in the action with the eyes on an equal basis. This was to make the table narrative more inclusive.
2. I loaded the last two day shifts with 16 figures instead of just two in the trial fresco of the hens' stable. Thus the dichotomy of

working people-eating people is dissolved into a merry chaos of movement, acting, mockery and situative improvisation. This was to take away the strain of a moralising doctrine of opposing work to having food. In fact no environment combines both as well as agriculture. The children's improvising suggestions were to reopen the view on the classless faculties of wo(men) of all positions and socialisations. As well as lowering the visual barriers for viewer by heightening the focal points, the dynamic mass of children was to introduce viewers to enter the picture on their own paths and according to their own liking.

3. They were now able to join the feast via two stairs (I added a left counterpart which was previously unplanned for, assuming that most viewers are socialised into reading from left to right and not in the Arabic or Judaic reading aesthetics).

4. I changed the table from a flat body to the giant embodiment of a St. Jacob's shell, suggesting the hospitality of a pilgrims' abode. In somehow our own situation as painters was profiting from the pilgrim-like status granted to us, being able to stay or leave according to dynamics of the visual creation process (a form of a secularised enlightenment notion of perception in the political economy of manual labour on one spot).

Another important social intervention during the painting and re-planning process was authored by Masha who objected after the first day shift that if continued there will be a terrible overload with personalities not leaving a single landscape depth to breathe. I consequently thinned the peopling of the following, most central day shift to the extreme, rendering the pastoral conversation muse smaller than I had initially thought. I took care not to litter landscape depth with scrub plasticity

exclusively as started on a light level in day shift number one. Still day shift 3 and 4 try to introduce personalities with respective recreational space to let them breathe and explain their presence from a bodily dynamic, i.e. explain how they came INTO the picture just as the viewer might come into the picture, not only making them appear as jokers on a card playing table practiced in day shift one. Such shifts are, funnily enough, to my mind still in keeping with the instauration of an overall conceptional tension integrating the whole picture. This case can be argued for the first group of day shift one, the Shakespearean secularisation of metaphysical projection to worldly cults: Roman-Catholic monkishness, masonry, matriarchal sorcery and childish curiosity to explore all this in a sober material sense [figure number 4] is of a different, a prologue character, like the witch-communion preceding the tragedy of Macbeth.

Graphic preparation

Fresco realisation in this project has been graphically prepared to a degree yet unprecedented in the 131 realisations before. Rather comically, the first sketch in the series of 5 test launches has been in scale 1:31,62, though 1:100 was prepared alongside. All models from this first stage onwards had 20 marks respectively, 4 to mark the angles of the inner ninth surface, 4 for the inner 25th and 12 for the inner 13/25th surface of the whole body to be painted, thus marking the Pythagorean proportions $1/5$ $2/5$ and $1/3$ in all dimensions, comprising the diagonal axis. From the discovery of the perfect square dimensions onwards (when the scaffolding arrived on the construction site 9.IV) the sketches (starting with scale 1:3,6, but working down again to 1:10 for the second half of day shifts) I included two centred

circles in the model marking: one of radius one third of total height and one of one half minus 4 cm in the original scale to reflect the bottom footer and a delicate left and right margin (top margin being assured by the concentric rooftop due to the space taken – in well-reflected proportional consideration by the building craftsmen – by the wine reservoir cubes left of the fresco).

Only after the first throwing series on 1:31,62 I diminished the respective graphic sketching idea and tried to concentrate it on 1:100. This inverse climbing of scale appeared accidental and the results did not convince me. The small repetition rather reminded me of a scholarly exercise to repeat the grand argument in minuscule conditions. The aid to refine the ideas was minimal, I suppose.

The initial sketches 1:100, 1:31,62 were already prepared as flat models using the juxtaposition of two material, the ideal a prima drawing paper with cardboard introducing blue tones to balance the warm prima effect and suggest the exactitude by 0,5 millimetre accidental lining (introduced in collage style).

I then glued a model 1:10 which reproduced the full cubature of the historic wine tanks of slightly und 40 cubic metres (in oenological terms 400 hectolitres) as well as the roof construction, however ignoring the carpentry modelling in free space in order not to get lost with the dynamics of movement in petty reproduction considerations. I was not sure that viewing the model could keep to the precise angles characterising real space viewing in the hall. Perhaps it would have been helpful to simulate the wooden

construction and its limitations put on the accessibility of the wall to viewers moving through the space of the hall. However refuting the option made me more conscious of the fragmenting effect of the static woodwork and from this model onwards every representation was featuring the re-unifying circles as a constructive basic element.

There was a brief moment when I hoped to integrate Masha's agency actively into the planning and we would have then let her elaborate the colour dynamics. This appeared to me an interesting approach to scale drawing and colouring separately to each other to serve a general line of argument by the fresco in projection. Yet with the offers to participate failing, the option of a separate colour line of tries and errors failed as well.

Instead, I focussed since early morning of Saturday, 13.IV on short-cutting the whole up-scaling process to 1:1 fresco by projecting a 1:3,6 fresco trial miniature. The hens' stable (lately used for the dog) offered a surprisingly close miniature model with equal space proportions and light relations, geographical orientation, water accessibility. So after short but intensive watering, I started to paint a miniature fresco on the corresponding miniature wall. Part of the wood-work on top could be imitated in fresco according to a standard central viewpoint. The drawing process and the preparation of a polyester cartone forced me to no longer put up a row of decisions. Still the overall dynamic was treated prior to any figurative rendering, though that came dangerously close to be fixed in immobile photographic rendering. Surprisingly, with some ignorant discipline, I could provide the circle structure into the colour application. The introduction of Iron red which was so advantageous in a secco painting in

project no. 130 and in fresco limestone in project 127 and 128 was not convincing. It may well be that the rather extravagant clay content of the final layer velo sand fraction applied in this region was not favourable to the transparent might of that red iron reflection body. To the contrary, I discovered that the Earth of Cyprus sold in Bavaria was matching the quality of the previous quantities bought in Italy from the specialist trade for restoration purposes (Phase) and precisely so for the Terra di cipro natura fredda confection, while the natura calda has little convincing transparency performance in limestone. The decision for this pigment was comparatively simple. Sienna natural was rather unfavourable in the rendering and I tended to throw it out, day shift no. 2 even abandoned it altogether in the end. To the contrary, orange iron oxide 960 did a marvellous job balancing the dual cold dark influence of ultramarine blue and Cyprus umbra. Actually little more was needed. Funnily, most of the details in the miniature trial fresco were painted with a very little but mid-long-haired brush which later got lost in the process, so that the telegram lettering became bigger than intended, which might not be a minus at all.

While plastering adjacent additional surfaces to define the surrounding of the miniature fresco better, I received a stroke of lime and sand into my left eye with such might I had never got before in 17 years with limestone. Though being able to wash quickly, then through myself into the salted swimming-pool nearby which has a luckily almost physiological salt concentration, the effect was astonishing. As the eye has so many nerves to the brain, I felt under shock as if physically caught in a traffic accident. For almost three entire days I could not think of opening the left eye again and over some period, I was

considering what it would be like to lose left eyesight. Though feeling extremely uncomfortable and uneasy altogether, I forced myself to utilise the freshly prepared velo in the hens' stable, as I had prepared myself so much suffering to have it in this perfect shape I could not stand the thought to let the ideal moment get past. Here, for the first time, I was completely surprised by the slowness of the drying process. Maybe it was due to my intense watering. Maybe the special clay component in the velo surface was preventing oxygen from carbonating the hydrated surface layers for a long time, reducing attack surface from the normal lung-like surface to a considerably smoother and more closed plain. Most probably the two factors were combining and even more so later on the real fresco wall I had the problem of extreme, up to 10 centimetre strong layers of limestone with only occasional and very superficial carbonisation superseded in 5 layers, so there was in fact a giant mass of hydrated lime mud with only millimetres of brick behind them to buffer moisture imports.

To the contrary a very positive and decisive observation in the trial fresco was the elasticity of the limestone systems on a wall in regard to the silicate particle body amalgamated in the two-layer preparation plastering regime. Obviously, I could be quite free to risk to go to extremes in limestone concentration without risking visible cracks in the drying process. Here as before both the intense watering and the locally specifics of the silicate bodies added up by different sand layering interacted... in this aspect very favourably. I could thus go for nearly Genova-type baroque "pastose_" brushstrokes. In the following, I went to extremes not only with pure hydrated lime applications on the velo but parallel with all 4 types of pigments involved. Of course, this extravagant expressivity had to valorise the first moments of open paintable velo

preparation, for later colour absorption by the wall would remain too superficial and the danger of a-technological empty effects would have blocked such experimental moods.

Painting the trial fresco I was acutely reminded about the value of two-eyed sight. I could possibly not determine how far the brush was from the velo when painting, because I had effectively lost all three-dimensionality of vision. Interestingly enough, I later noticed that quite a number of personalities created that day in the trial procedure reflected this asymmetry of eyesight, most prominently so the future protagonist of the main focus of interest in the whole composition which I modelled into being the Brazilian grandmother to Anna-Maria, a process which experienced some objection by Virgilio who in a devotion quite interesting to watch promoted instead his mother in an intensity of argument which probably cannot be understood fully by strangers to the specific "Marianismo" created in the backwaters of Roman-catholic appropriation and distorting rendering of pre-historic matriarchal legacies. Mash and me were out-rightly sorry to have mounted such a potentiality for conflict, yet we also sensed that there was no way back and that we had to go forth with our iconographic main line to the picture taking in critical objection to consolidate our rendering the main line chosen already.

The miniature trial fresco in scale 1:3,6 was preceded by a slightly larger drawing 1:3,16. Very quickly in the drawing process which was to give a reliable chiaroscuro equilibrium for the whole entity of the composition if not the colour dynamics already, I had noticed that I was running into too minute detail, getting lost and loosing thereby the integral dynamics

of the whole. It was certainly a good decision to evacuate forces from this impasse by reducing scale and going for technical completion of fresco painting approximation instead, yet it might have been an interesting experience to fully calibrate the whole design on 1:3,16 scale in a definite chiaroscuro resolution. My attention to this step was heightened by the marvellously clear and only slightly dogmatic prose on drawing technique by Walter Sickert at the beginning of the 20th century. He stresses the necessary three steps of a drawing, while assuring that painting is mainly a drawing exercise in only as little colours possible. Step one would be the tentative search for dynamic lines in the movement. Step two the rendering of light and body (chiaroscuro), step three what he –quite dogmatically in the sticky late British Imperial authoritarianism permeating the years of his privileged production- calls the "definite" line. Sickert's doctrines are permeated not only with Imperial mannerisms but worse so with a constant machos' bias, though, even from an extremely critical standpoint to his highly artificial narrative, optimised for social effects in his lifetime, reviewing it allows us to sharpen our attention to the steps we find necessary in evolving a drawing.

Instead of going for the full 2nd step on 1:3,16, I just made dynamic orientation lines on the area of the planned first day shift. Planning for day shifts proved very useful and as I had already prepared two points for taking decisions on the graphic structure and the day to day repartition of the square metres workload, it needed next to no modification in the following two weeks. Though I am always suspicious when I seem to get lost in geometrical preparations, this work of defining the space for action proved no fetishist "Übersprunghandlung_" (shoving off the

pressure and expectation for a necessary creative step by tripling about with technical preparations of the step). Preparation and risking a step are always needed in organic relation, extremes are important to get to know real limits. However the juxtaposition itself is too little materialist in comprehension (in Bourgeois manner fashioning supposedly “free creation” over the abyss of being subdued in manually mechanic, or a step further from Capital to Patriarchal work division analysis to reproductive tasks). Such equilibriums in a creative collective (even if there is only one manual executer of a collective decision process) can only be understood as extremely dynamic. As soon as routine regulates their dimension in the political economy of time, space and purchase power in acquiring resources, we lose the live thread making good pictorial production possible. There cannot be a Fordist preparation to complex painting tasks. Yet, and in this I follow the convincing and hilariously open-minded excellency of mural schools in the Soviet Union up to 1934 (really exceeding in sustainable quality the Mexican subjectivist campaigns of their contemporaries in a prolonged second period ideology [popular front from below] while the ComIntern centre was moving from the third [class against class] already toward a 4th [popular front from above]): there can be astonishing results in collectively balanced approximations to Fordist workday intensities. Though either way there should be little illusion on the distribution of benefits from such intensification; serious social fresco painters will probably continue to work real time 16 hours day shifts with no holiday for a very long time to come through future class struggles.

The ideas formulated by Sickert reconciled me with the cartone elaboration (Anna-

Maria was generous to sponsor a full area polyethylene cartone of 30 square metres, though this cost not more than 12,- Euros in the end, it was a step I had only once dared to take... for a much lower number of fresco square metres in intervention no. 43 13 years back. Then, I had retaken the cartone line from a casein sketch on the wall itself. This was not feasible in project 132 because there was a number of calamities with the wall surface in preparation, first terribly profound holes, then terribly wet and very slowly drying lime fillings and then previous day-shifts in very fragile wet states for many days who recorded the smallest touchdown of a cartone fitting process with irreparable destruction to the fresco painting on their surfaces.

So in the following step up the scale to 1:1 preparation, I simulated the entire wall on the floor of the hall before. This allowed to draw much more fluently, try out various arrangement in 1:1, given that Anna-Maria sponsored an abundance of cheap concept paper to cover the 25 square metre floor under preparation and work on it with scissors and sticky tape in collage type luxury.

Already for the first day-shift, the cartone plastic marker line on polyethylene was very much a process in the sense of Sickert's number 3: evolving a “definite line”. In my theoretical doctrine, this cartone line gets actually two more corrections: one by recopying it with (a technique now finalised) with the back points of best-shaped brushes, much better than the butter knife of 2000, on the half-morbid velo in the process of finally drying into painting consistency. Unfortunately, there is too much nerve-flattering actually in this final stage prolonging preparations for the actual fresco painting into unbearable length to

still correct or reinterpret major parts. Very often spontaneous corrections while recopying with mechanical pressure to the velo through the polyethylene surface dynamics (modelling the lime mass when drying is not homogeneous [it never was during no. 132] in a day-shift and some parts are actually too wet to assure an immaculate take-off of the polyethylene from the velo surface after drawing). These dynamics are extremely mind-blowing, the cartone is actually being pulled to and fro in the order of a whole centimetre and it would be sheer horror to imagine I would do that to the lime surface through an non-transparent paper cartone (how brutal to imitate Renaissance necessities at Warsaw academy, well, it is their proverbial hunt for penny-economies as well, same producing those brush-rattling sandy rough-surfaces, as the workshop master delights in having saved some more decagram of limestone from a student's reach, Academic production has such distorted and unbecoming political economies in almost every minute detail that I rather would not like to work therein, in Madrid neither, but that is to be verified).

During elaboration of the first day shift cartone, I accidentally found that the plastic writer line can be effaced from its polyester carrier material by a mere wishy-washy movement with soft cloth. That brought me much closer to elaborating a "definite" line meriting its Sickert labelling in a certain sense. Of course, defined extensions in flat space are the death of living painting and there has to be the most vivid reinterpretation of such skeleton rattling once we have the line play as a shadow game in the surface and translate it into brush dynamics and colour hues. But there must be something to this black nylon stocking frenzy as it has persisted throughout a century now: contouring is not always the effacing of the living body,

in a socialisation environment of commodified glancing, it can really be the only last resort to drive home the point about some materiality of bodies (Judith Butler will surf on the computer screen fashion through Hegelian minds on 6 continents and re-convince them that there is none such materiality, I remain open to be convinced by her if that is what feminism needs to make a point; (Judith Butler in Bodies that matter_) Curiously enough, when the delicate Hegelian idealist Butler found herself constrained to choose a cover motive for an somehow essentially material book, she choose to reproduce the mural pattern of a rare fresco document of matriarchal life on our past planet).

So at this point, when contouring retransforms into the materiality of bodies (better not put it to the edge by dropping the word "Judy" in this effort to convince all but her) on the fresco surface we have finally left the realm of happy preparation. The following is a matter of some few minutes of grace: the actually painting and repainting up to 4 times. That's definitely another chapter. Because first, we have to clarify the process of...

Materially constructive preparation

Fresco painting functions around a body of water. There is eventually a silicate body you need to mechanically hold the water and MOST IMPORTANT to buffer away excess water at a first impact moment and render it back to the surface over a desirably very, very long period afterwards (on ceilings with no absorption to the top 72 hours are very normal, and that is about the extreme ideal, upper extremes

are limited by simple closed limestone surface evaporation). Evaporation and intake by the profundity of a wall or ceiling are so excessive in relation to our water consistency needs for a sol-gel body responsive to fresco brushstrokes that we need a chemical source of water on the spot which is most luckily the same substance tearing the so-gel-continuum most slowly towards a window forced on mud-situation: the carbonating limestone over hydrated lime.

In the first 14 years, actually until Salzwedel in 2011, I thought fresco painting is about lime dynamics. Nothing can be more misleading. Actually it is really about water dynamics, so in Judith Butlers sense, I am slowly moving towards a more bodiless comprehension of the material peel of the body we are so concerned about here.

Acrylic paint is clearly the enemy of water and its blocking stupidity in construction physics, though it is open to diffusion as the marketing experts in corporate service are keen to demonstrate manipulatively to sell under restoration regulations (German Bauordnung now using the diplomatic slander "difussionsoffen" instead of the precise requirement "Silikat- bzw. Kalkgebundeneerdfarbsystem"), is topped only by sulphurous plaster. In the case of no. 132, there was acrylic paint on the concrete plastering and this was the starting point of a three week 16 hour a day ordeal. The craftsmen had promoted it stressing a lime component which I did not find, neither in the white surface painting of his, nor in his obnoxious plastering. Funnily, I completely mis-estimated the effort needed to clear off this combined superfluous concrete power. After 4 hours of incessant banging on the wall, I had been able to clear less than a square

metre. It looked like sculpture's work in basalt, with every stroke of the hammer winning a further millimetre of free capillary surface ready to absorb water actively. Not that we weren't getting anywhere but this would take a full week of incessant banging and turmoil for all people living nearby. So after some logistic difficulties, I got a 18 kg pneumatic hammer of 2 KW. By the law of impulse, it through me as much through the hall as it hit the concrete. This law was becoming really trubbling at 5,40 metres height above ground on a scaffolding which oscillated accordingly on top of its second storey. Luckily at this point the young future civil engineer Maria had not yet dissipated her assessment rumour that the whole structure of the antique roof was to come down due to wall destabilisation. This idea was haunting her parents just later, when everything was gladly over and done with. And after a series of a half hundred hits, the concrete mass would eventually give way. But not getting the concrete off the wall, that was possible only on rare occasions when the underlying bricks were burnt at too high a temperature, their consistency approaching glass and their colour changing into black. All other more red bricks were so firmly fixed to the concrete plastering under bunker formula that it was inevitable to chuck off a layer of the bricks to get anywhere and thus get the acrylic cover out of the hall. The bricks were in an Iberian fashion of a very hollow and thin making. This would seriously affect their ability to enhance capillary movement of water horizontally and thus made them almost invalid as a buffer. As we later saw, building lime bodies on them layer by layer to prepare the painting process proved almost as problematic as plastering on outright moisture blockers with no buffering capacity at all such as... an acrylic surface. Having gained little for the water regime we aimed at during painting, we nevertheless had a good

anchoring of our layers in the wall combined with the possibility to build up massive limestone buffer capacity in the course of a long drying process.

While Diego Rivera regularly used goats' hair for difficult fresco prime layers, we took to pine needles. Under the influence of the high pH-regime by the surrounding active lime, they were soon surrounded by yellow and lightly greenish migration of organic substances into the drying limestone. This migration of colouring and potentially acidifying substance could have a potential impact on the fresco surface in the future as needles were planted so densely in the first two lime layers and they had an astonishing length up to 20 cm, so that they systematically stuck out of the second last layer. I then cut them with a pair of scissors. Nevertheless on plastering the velo on a rather soft basis, the movement would promote other needles' endings to move out and stick out of the final layer. There are about 14 such incidents I noticed. It would have been bad for the final layer consistency to cut them right away, so I left the task for later. Once the fresco painting was catching the visionary attention altogether, these elements disappeared and posed no point of distraction anymore, so I decided not to risk surface scratches by cutting them... and even cutting them would have just limited their length sticking out. As long as I avoided touching the painted surface, the needles would continue to poke out. In spite of these surprises, I was glad to have included this structural element in the first two layers, thus as long as the lime content did not drop under 20%, the gravel in solution would be marvellously stabilised once applied, i.e. the moment of application would pretty well coincide with a quite irreversible transformation of the plastering mass from sol to gel in the terminology of physical chemistry. Other techniques of solidifying a reluctantly carbonating mass were less convincing.

With the help of Virgilio for transport, I mobilized some 5 square metres of broken historic red tiles to the construction site. After watering them for several days, I would smash them manually and thus obtain pieces to stuff individual holes with after plastering. The problem was that these bricks stuck out of the level aimed at for final plastering just as well as they filled the holes, it appeared. All in all there was too much logistics and the end result never precise enough. This technique I learnt in Eastern Poland in 1997 is really rather good to save lime mass. Uniramous sharp gravel of under 2 cm of size can do the job with more precision. Characteristically, I underestimated the need of such gravel and filling with a mixture of different sands by half when starting the plastering. In spite of achieving a certain inclusion of air space especially in the depth of holes (air content of the mass would have been much higher, actually up to 50 % when not using a traditional cement mixer but a hand "Quirl"-mixer) the need for material to fill holes came close to a ton.

The day shifts were prepared in different moisture regimes, with the first in the most moist and problematic regime: big saturated hydrate lime corpus with only very superficial carbonisation and almost no buffering performance. Though I waited up to 72 hours before applying a new layer (in a dryer regime 2 hours is just fine) each mechanical impact would just shift the whole mass of previous plastering. Of course this effect could have been avoided by just keeping the water regime more precarious. And that is exactly what happened involuntarily on the higher edges of day shift 1 (most negative impact), 2 and 3. By the time of day shift 4 I had the necessary experience with the abnormal situation to counteract this with an additional, effectively 5th layer of lime plastering in between on the fast drying spots. Though from the first day of

watering I placed special attention on the higher edges of the wall, they were constantly drying out faster. While the lower 95% of the brick surface changed colour irreversibly after the first half hour moistening too deep red like brick under water these upper fringes would eventually shift back to light dry red in 2 or three occasions, though I started and ended every watering session with just those problematic 5 %. In the first day shift, as the whole mass dried in 12 hours much less than normally in half an hour with an optimal buffering system, the upper fringed would get three consecutive layers of calcinated water without pigment for re-establishing an artificial moisture equilibrium. At this stage I could not apply the cartone without heavy risk of scratching the extremely soft lower surfaces. I did not want to paint without having the overall sketch, especially the giant circles for orientation as I want each brushstroke to correspond in length, width, intensity of colour and impulse of application, in inner dynamics and bending to a reliable sensual knowledge of the entire wall-painting. The effect of the brush moistening was not convincing. On applying the first ultramarine hue there was a highly irritating tendency of the velo to reject the colour in a sparkle of then shiny dots. It was as if rejecting water, a clear sign of drying. Repainting would hardly alleviate this phenomena and it would get me into a secco painting modus which would infest the bordering lower parts where fresco painting mode was still very much appropriate. After that irritating experience, I assumed that the error was to take calcinated water. I imagined that there had been a carbonisation and crystallisation process at certain surface spots which acquired an out-rightly hydrophobic character during subsequent moistening over the course of the day. But alas, the next two day-shifts did not behave any better on their upper fringes

though I now replaces calcinated water with pure water. Only in the lift upper fringe of the 4th day shift, I finally adopted the strategy to introduce a water-generating cushion in form of a repeated second last layer plastering on an area of some 40 x 50 cm. I did not include the right periphery of the fresco. The difference can be clearly seen in the painting result. As with so many difficulties, it is only the effort to surmount and circumpass their dead-locks that will create a wholeness and consistent outward appearance of the final result. Any outward appearance is in the end the more or less successful sublimation of the result with such elemental difficulties. So the idea evolving in the course of the day shifts to revalue the idea of a giant ship and view it from above made the fringes into waves and oceanic water, so the white stars blurring its ultramarine depth were just what was needed... in fact a structure hardly possible to be attained by conscious effort on an ideally buffered and moistured (wined and dined) fresco preparation. The uniformity of fringe drying now creates a unity of the rendering of wave around the sailing ship seen from above and the steps of the Mexican pyramid to the left (day shift no. 3). Interestingly, the deck structures at the top of day shift no. 1 show, how the Cyprus earth pigment has such a power of transparent covering that it is rather immune to the microhydrophobic spot structure it has come to lay upon. Whereas the adjacent water surface is broken in sparks, i.e. sprinkles of dynamically moving water, the deck is, though light and thrillingly transparent in appearance, of a continuous structure suggesting a wooden plank world of consistency and continuous, though fancy, rhythm. This adventure shows that physical preparation is an integral part of the creative process. It shows the power of liquidating class divisions between assistant and painter,

building crafts(wo)man and white-collar draughts(wo)man, which was so paramount right into the last big fresco volumes in the world movement of the arts in 20th century Mexico. The Riviera San Francisco School of Art fresco places the Latin villain in the position of the deus-ex-machina exercising unquestionable pictorial power from his controlling centre over the periphal manual workers in the symbolic banality of phallic brush mastery. A new quality of social revolutionary movement had to evolve a new quality of classless social fresco scenarios. And that might be one of the reasons why Masha intuitively shrank away from joining the mere painting process in the following after the coarse odyssey of physical surface preparation extending over almost three weeks before.

Elaborating a layering structure a fresco

The dynamic of working the limits of a day-shift

The first day shift was born out of a pragmatic haste. I wanted to see it materialising and I noticed that I would get lost in paper model worlds if I continued to go through the chiaroscuro composition of the whole in paper simulation before. It proved just right to construct the two giant circles on the soil in the cartone system of reference. A few points, on the average three to each day shift, most of them shared, the central point (though about 3 cm too much to the right and four too much to up, because the desolate underlying brick structure would not offer any hold for a screw in the precisely geometrical centre of the wall) even 4 times by the day shifts number 1,3,4 and 5 anchored on it.

It proved excellent to have the entire cartone attuned to the entire wall to drive out any material inconsistencies and define all borderline orientation on the polyester body within the established standard of precision of half a centimetre. Never again did the whole cartone meet with the whole wall. It was positively unnecessary. I cut up the cartone, with the consistent wholeness present in the special relations defining the two dimensions interesting us in its use.

The five heads on the edges of the inner circle and also their vertical anti-thesis in the form of the round edge of the crane and its two wheels hanging down were all prefigured as trees or round-shaped scrubs in all preceding drawings and most prominently so in the miniature trial fresco 1:3,6.

The overall idea was to introduce the vertical quality of the landscape behind the wall to create depth inside of the wall painting. But stressing the circle line would have made the mountain take a round shape and the depiction would have become illustrative and lost its potential transparency. Transforming the graphic forms of trees into corresponding heads the edge of the circle was being drawn closer to the observer. This tendency is epitomised in the apparent contradiction between the size of figure 1 and the upper figure of the 3rd day shift on half the scale.

I wanted to create immediate presence, incurring perspective contradictions was desirable in a certain measure. The two animals A and B were initially meant as a black cat springing and a white cat observing. Springing was also the abolition of perspective, the transfer in space which the observer makes in the opposite direction. The figure no. 1 was meant from the start as an essential character of the donkey's voyage in Lucien, Photis. As to

her Macedonian-Greek name, she was getting strong front light from the actual window. She has a saucepan on her head (1a). In the Roman literary source she is described as a domestic slave to a landlady. In daytime she expected to work with the saucepan in the kitchen. As Afro-Caribbean music celebrates the night is the only time, slaves have granted to their own priorities. The night of a slave's life inverts the order, there is hardly a command relation between the two meeting. Critically reviewing, I think her fingers are too childish. She should have more mature and experienced hands. In the end it is her "magic" which catapults the donkey into his/its odyssey. Charms and animal impulsivity are related in the antique text source. When reading David Graeber's "Lost People" I wondered why he does not decipher the language of charms more materialistically into a political economy of slightly unmentionable intimate relations dynamics. This could leave aside many of the habitual Freudian terminology which has nowadays become reified charm language itself. Of the spring cow (C) underneath, I knew next to nothing before. My long quest for its definite line with countless effacing of preliminary tentative lines on the polyester cartone had the effect that the calligraphic movement was placed with a surety not always at my disposal on the extensively wet surface, retreating slightly but if handled with care not too much as to seriously disrupt the absorptive power of the surface. In fact I introduced the highly concentrated ultramarine strokes much earlier than I had planned to encroach on the lower regions of the day shift and to my amazement they hold fast. This might as well be related to the unusual clay content of the last layer which smothers the surface and breaks carbonisation but at the same time establishes a preliminary holding arrangement (wassergebundene Decke_) with the strong capillary link of

water molecules and clay structures on the micro-level of producing relatively brush-resistant wet in wet surfaces.

The tail of the cow in spring (the springing cow) was too transparent and not strong enough in relation to the body as covered by the section of the first day shift after the first calligraphic sketching essay. I then retook it later with Cyprus earth and the transparent might to create thinned and condensed ails throughout a single brush-stroke were surprising. However, I still muse whether the colouristic differentiation was really justified, whether the second line was still too little dynamic in the calligraphic condensation of its context. Funnily, the evolution of this detail nuance cannot be explained without the German culinary stereotype of "Ochsenschwanzsuppe_", a childhood memory of a peculiar taste, which was recalled while preparing the day shift in a radio coverage of the culinary Olympics at Erfurt by Frank.

To understand the evolution of figures in several colour shifts it could be helpful to document the succession on colour layering in time. The miniature trial fresco had helped to establish a settled order of colour intervention, which funnily enough did hardly ever need a step back to a colour already used. The first day shift helped to consolidate this choice and it was kept up throughout the whole process. From day shift 3 onwards the introduction of strong white hues of pure lime in a transparent intent on already pre-established contours gained new momentum which is not present in the previous day-shifts on such central spots as for example faces.

Day-shift II

Was marked by an almost ironic distance to the over-the top constructionism of the

previous intervention (Überbauironie). I used the repressive call (no more figures) to slash open space for the central part. In the end, I had placed just as many figures (9) as before, but the area covered was 40 % larger. I went lower in picture geometry and this direction taken risks the ironic Italian expression “terra terra (earth, earth)”. There is obviously one earth for every foot and we are clearly continuing to walk, though not in the sky or classical literature personage any more. Once having descended to terra terra, I explored the field (its rhythmicity in olive tree populace) its rise to the horizon line on the mountain top and then the navigation theme, a ship seen from the far top rafts and even a bit higher, actually the ship is trailing slightly behind us deep down underneath in the ultramarine blue sea. This development was never planned for before the actual execution of day shift one suggested such possibilities. Its most radical coloristic consequences were already prepared for in the miniature fresco trial of the hens’ stable weeks before. But this dispositive had remained empty. Now it was suddenly filled: water was streaming in to fill it leaving the colour conception untouched. In the end, our stance in Portugal was to be a preparation for migrating to aid the Bolivarian Revolution in Venezuela. We had perfect practice with the European mainland version of PSUV PCP in Alpiarça, temperate Portuguese winter for preparing to live through permanent tropical summer, and the solitude of Atlantic coastal provinciality shared by both the colonies and the colonising of past centuries. Portugal as well as Galicia are but extensions of overseas colonies which have outgrown their colonisers’ mother lands in importance, dynamics and perspective. The ship and our glance preceding its stormy advancement towards these hegemonic territories on the other side of lake Atlantic appeared to me the

necessary counter-weight to becoming so engaged with Portuguese local matters as in the circles thus substantiated in day shift II.

Day-shift III

A turning point for figurative dynamics. Only hours before starting to paint on the fresco surface left to dry for many hours, I took the risk in this impatient moment to reverse the whole outset of figure composition of the whole project. I wanted to have nobody present any more to just represent or just fill in fill up or shut up, I wanted agency, immediate presence, dynamic contradictions to the point of rupture with anatomical tolerance towards distortions our experience judges as still normal. I was curiously satisfied how this mighty unrest settled the shepherd (really a female shepherd) at the table which was not yet even clear in outlines and could have become anything from flat to round, just as the vision of the world in 1350. No wonder that association and projection was now going haywire with fig. 31 passing from being the Polish artist Marta Radziszewska_ from Rosachata South of Warszawa-Wilanów to Mathilda, a US guest at Rostock convergence centre preparing against G8 2007 with us. Marta has remained in my mind, based on memories of 1997, reshaped by Karol Sulej’s strong opinions in March 2000 as on the one hand a rather clumsy character of nouveau-riche family success always at the top of Academic patriarchal esteem, employing some occasional tricks to keep her rather weak top position. On the other hand, she has struck no easy compromise engaging with Andrej from Biała Podlaska in a creative conversion of enormous potential, then breaking up, relieving Andrej into an epitomic of hasty hunt for ready-made success in the dollar sphere

of Warsaw employment. Posing as a commercial “Art director”, he had to take to using a wristband made of a bicycle chain, probably rather inconvenient to sleep with. Yet Mathilda (a pseudonym) from Madison/Wisconsin, drifting towards a West coast scientific career underpinning her dissent with the social status quo is rather on the opposite of potential evolvment. How funny, she has Polish background as well. The French agent of keeping equality equilibrium (fig. 32) is curiously enough very much modelled after a mural painting I have probably seen first in Autumn 1983 and last in summer 1990. It was presumably painted by a French guest. It had a dynamic I since then associate with Delaunay and cannot possibly discern from a very general impression of French-labelled excellence in bourgeois painting. Though, I refuted the use and idea of the room adorned and, to my mind, insincerely decorated with this painting, a room for student’s self-employment, a pseudo-liberty determined by class schedule inconsistencies forcing to bridge “Freistunden” well into the afternoon. A room still oppressed by the stench and sweat of alienating authoritarian pressure by the superiors’ class (the teacher class) whose oppression had to be blasted together with the building facilitating its enforcement. I never really carefully looked at this mural. It was certainly concerned with cinematic motion and had lavishly dynamic figures, a certain superficiality of impressionist making clearly superior to every post-medieval iconographic rendering attempted at by locally-bred hobby embellishers of class-room oppression all around. Though I took care never really to look at it, for ideologically I refuted it, it nevertheless became the very proto-type of a mural realisation, a mode of spanning contradictions towards gently giving in on the enemy class. This shepherd standing is quite obviously a lady, her figure seems

cast in an iron knit’s apparel. The initial sketch on 1:3,16 when the figure was still a rather male and subservient shepherd of Ribatejo, a person mostly drawn in to present the silhouette qualities of the regional cap was read by Masha and Anna-Maria independently as somehow medieval in expression. As it has proved favourable to do with shades produced by architectural space, which are there anyway if we do not remodel everything, it is not ill-advised to just underpin such tendencies with hue interposition. Very surprisingly, the Cyprus earth proved at its maximum performance throughout the whole process of six days’ final painting in these two minutes when I transparently cast it over a rather mean blue cut-out in a terribly wide brush (25 cm). As first noted with the new generation of Spinell_ pigments around 2000, the moment you drop pigments of superb quality and preparation into pure lime water and start with a fresh brush, you get a most fortunate uneven and thus pointed expressivity of collocations, which are random and have to be dimensioned similar to using a breeze with the help of a sail when you know it is acutely short to last. Satisfaction with the 4 figures increased top down, so the sitting model shepherd was the luckiest strike. It was ready in less than a minute and unlike most other surfaces I proved disciplined enough never to retouch it. It was at once cast together with the drought oxen’s horns and decorative flower compounds (G, F 34. e) and f)). The argument to appease my desire to remodel after the orange iron oxide hue set the ultramarine silhouette in special relations was that this resembled an Austrian caravan dweller, actually dating with a hippie at Konigsstuhl_ near Salzwedel, who occasionally posed as a shepherd and really sells lambs to Muslim buyers in berlin and Hamburg. She spent a whole evening cooking out a heart-shaped detail

of her caravan's motor in a regular cooking pot. First meeting her, I could convince her to have her improvise on the guitar to my fiddling nuisance and that bliss of convergence could never ever be topped later, so I left her on the lime as she first appeared on it.

Day-shift IV

At the half of realisation, I decided for a major break and three entire days of regressing to new modelling efforts on a much smaller scale down to 1:10. The provoking point for this major step back was a certain critical uneasiness with the legs of figure 33 already on 1:1 pencil sketching which clearly seemed to indicate to me that I was terrified by the scale rather than rejoicing at its vast open landscape of evolving possibilities (the pragmatic doctrine goes currently: possibilities only evolve if we put the constant rearrangement of our fragmented arsenal of artisanal faculties to a more adequate use in material processes in relation to an inquiring and socially broadly shared planning effort).

The result of the refocusing and scaling down to scale up again was a completely new freshness of figure dynamics for rendering the volatile contradictions I considered to be of such a high value for the people potentially having a look at the intentional mess I was to create at the bottom of the painting.

However the first intervention was high up (day shift no. IV). It had to counter-balance the combined achievements of the opposite extremes: dynamic and monumental figures, decisive action, architectural space and desirably a more convincing narrative for the upper parts than in shift no. III, for this was the

direction of optimistic moves of any observers' eye-balls up-right reading (from left to right, always assuming Greek/Latin letter schooling prevails, does it?) and thus being carried up and away. The day preceding the shift was 25th of April and I felt very spooky that we did not join celebrations on a more public level. So here it was to be recreated: the public concern, we had obviously missed out the day before. We had heard a lot of stories instead (unfortunately in English and some French, not in Portuguese, so they arrived at our minds white-washed for international use and generality). To counter-balance this, my faculties to render a distanced and light-handed characterisation were at their height. No shift shows class divisions and proletarian agency so clearly as this. It was an achievement I had long aimed for, but it was mainly the result of a compensational intention (compensate for our failure to engage in a more societal realisation of the 39th birthday to Portuguese emancipation).

Day-shift V

Was started with the easiness of a joke, plastering preparation was already receding, I could store away many items previously littering the painting front. I span clear blue graphics from one end to the other and never really retouched them in contrast to all previous shifts. The degree of refinement and finalisation, of almost trans-figurative visionary intensity of day shift no. IV was not to be repeated. I did want no inflation of thrill and magic. I wanted clear and simple narrative and it turned out to be blue. By mere coincidence the Italian medieval fresco brush type used that day had not been

lying around any time before, all its homologous brothers and sisters had been too badly washed and stiffened with oil residues, so I did not dare to use them on the utterly fragile lime surface. So, this was the day to start and I immediately say that the laconic qualities of this fabulous fresco brush type does really need no retouching. I also wanted to make gradient between shifts and areas palpable. So I retouched only rather to stress the a-prima expressivity of the whole: the lips, 4 cherries, some fingering of the left hand (I always doubted whether this was readable really as an anatomically plausible and a genuinely lively dynamic as it had to be. When Masha proposed that I should make the fond behind the table darker (she had been opposed to the round table and wanted the flat, the Ptolemaic version to be retained) I answered curiously, that the area underneath the ox's horns (G) are the Victoria lake district in full equatorial blossom, they shine with light, these regions are the origin of the Nile and many other rivers, I mockingly argued, they should not be shaded, every little plot of them is too important for the whole perimeter downstream to mud the water, shade the clarity of graphic distribution initiating from that little region. She laughed and I later bent a St. Jacob's shell form allusion in triangle form into this delicate part. Luckily the risky touch turned out quite transparent. Its counterpart between figure 34 and 37 became more rigid and less transparent and for a dynamic that I not bad. I am still shivering at the risk I then took, there had been no planning for the operation and it was of a suspicious ideological origin to impose the triangles to the round table, but it then happened to settle in an acceptable manner. I am not really fascinated by the results, there si something sobering me looking at it. I do not quite know what. Of course the centre of the giant shell form is only correctly defined by the linearity of the

triangle shapes when the bent under no. 34. a) is really moving high up – never planned for, never conceived, contradicting a row of other necessary manners of viewing the situation which are also necessary, even more so, because the table has to be Ptolemaic, nothing else is modest enough for our human experience. Of course the earth is flat. 99,9% of our lives is just fitted to this conception, nothing else occurs to us if not studying the travels of Magellan or hitting our head against the absurdities created by the pretensions of a counter-Greenwich border of date. So the fist holding the glass of water is really sinking into a mass of foam rather than a shell-surface. It is, as Russian goes "nelepy", in German it is "albern (sily, unbehaving, uncough)" and that is rather not what I am heading for when painting (as it goes there all the time anyway, so I rather put emphasis on contrary elements).

Day-shift VI

Of the whole complex 38 to 41 the V-th day shift had no real clue, they mainly evolved only during the VI-th day shift when painting was leaping backward. I thought this little transgression of technological discipline (painting on lime surface with more than sporadic intentions 36 hours after applying the last layer, when carbonisation progress forces absorption to become superficial if moisture regime is not supra-optimal) necessary to undo the arbitrary interruption of the door and reconstitute the integrity of the two circles.

Funnily enough, it was not until the very last day shift when Masha and me ceded

to fear that the big circles (inner and outer) would not match in the end and could not be concluded, though they were heading to each other with the panned for accuracy/inaccuracy of half a centimetre at each moment of time.

So the sixth and last day shift had to do the job of putting it all together again. In the miniature trial I had just left out the kids' commune down at the cat table. My left eye was so terribly hurting then, I could not think it funny to populate the lower right end with kids doing the feast better than their bigger companions in the picture's centre upstairs. Now, I had to counter-balance this choice of a convenient silence. And it turned out to be noisy to the utmost. I was so exhausted with painting, repainting, repainting and repainting those 17 figures engaged with for the last go, that I hardly saw any sense to the whole chaos any more. But I intuitively felt that the visual entrance lies not on the left but on the right stairs, the one which can be used by the eyes in reading direction (always assuming that the majority of centuries under Arabic reading experience on this region as compared to the centuries of its reversal after the sectarian Christian conquest has left less an imprint on the movement of our eyes which is perhaps a big delusion). But depth of space can only be created situatively by chaos, by overwhelming our senses of orientation and thus make the eyes entangle in a game of special distinction when there is in fact a mostly flat surface informing them. The limits of the medium itself are its possibilities, its major means of expression, its passion and redemption.

I went about the entire farm for 20 minutes to search a brush to do the writing of the telegram in a concise and miniature

manner, leaving two thirds of the space available for typographic silence. But I did not find that brush, it turned up only a week later very close to the place where I ha so desperately wanted to use it. So, I went ahead with a bigger brush. The letters were now fitting on the page with no typographic elements of silence whatsoever by sheer acrobatics of hampered brush-strokes. Masha assured that that was the ideal way to do so. I still doubt whether that is actually the case, but I cannot compare with any more successful versions. Writing is doubtless the all-powerful enemy of drawing. Writing, this arrogant exposure of one-dimensionality, is leading the eyes of interested folk to follow a pre-conceived guiding direction instead of putting offers at their disposal. No wonder, interactive surfaces of computer applications proceed by graphic optionality instead of authoritative one-dimensional narrative. I took care to prepare the telegram's surface (53. a)) as brush-ridden as possible, making fun of the future writing to the utmost, making it unimportant and ephemeral, a mere impotent littering of a space already modelled to the utmost with its own graphic depth, with a dynamic of its own from warm to cold, from "daughter" to the insinuating question when asked in a rhetorical, myogenic brutality of authoritative life-guidance, we inherited in so many aspects from the infamous brutality of 19th century colonisation.

As to the three attractions above, the maître des plaisirs' holding of the pomegranate, fig. 14. a), the chameleon, I, and its fly, H, as well as the local fruits arrangement, fig 14. b), their rendering is accidental and deeply unsatisfactory to me. Of course the chameleon has been prepared in ironic forecast by the line issuing from the Brazilian grandma, fig. 54, but its thrust on the telegram as on the fly is over-emphasised and thus tends to be static. The whole animal was so messy

(Masha: “chistaja kasha”, Russian for: pure (burnt) oat porridge), that I recast it with that August Macke tick of seeking silhouette assurance, a highly limiting means of saving figurative consistency. The whole mess could now at best pass as a porcelain figuration. Unfortunately there are traits pointing to worse, a cartoon rendering, a – beware Disney production, it’s terrible. It’s not what I wanted, planned for, prepared for, such failure is so insulting and mind-blowing in the end. Why did I fail this? Did I have to fail this? Is the overall construction made to have this failing? The humour is hampered, it does not spring out of a box as a surprise, not even bumpily so as with the Jacob’s shell triangles on the other side of the table’s conceptual mess. Exotic things is not sufficient as a depiction strategy. Exotism is a scam. The humorous potential of the scene remains frozen (is this already what could have been achieved, is this really all, imaging can show?). Maybe this are the repercussions of the harsh discussion at the lunch table on 25th of March who should be the grandma hindered to study Fine Arts (studying is such a trifle, the main interest should instead be to MAKE, materialise such promise day in day out for the other 50 years to come after the 5 years of posing as an “Artist” and socialising to celebrate the mere intention of doing so. As the perfect proletarian (and distinctly macho) five star hotel cook, the weekend neighbour to the fresco put it on 5th of May reviewing the outcome: there are artists, but we are workers. If I am not completely mistaken, he included us, the fresco collective in his epigram, which would be a satisfactory final statement for our tentative agency in Portugal 2012/2013. We have reached our aim. We have experienced our limits and got a sense of how to surmount them in future run-ups: we are working people. We try we ultimately fail. The labour relation is set

against us. Our life is short and our chances to out-trick the trap set for us are minimal... so we try.

Tentatively summarising the social process of visual production

Observations on the dynamics of manual, conceptual and social decision-making

As with all more complex accomplishments in socially mitigated life, the specific combination of physical construction and draughts(wo)man labour essential to a free fresco painting needs continual modification of course and mode of advancing. We have to continually engage and pause, rethink and re-conceptualise to alleviate at least the most blatant grievances entangled by preceding doctrines we adopted for the sake of pragmatic advancement. It is a more common wisdom of life experience that grievances, i.e. limitations of preceding working doctrines, cannot be alleviated on the spot where we first face its consequences but need a more radical work of doctrinal change and adaption affecting the whole of the field under construction. Actually, no real progress can be achieved unless we address the whole entity under composition to be refocused. Analogously, Marx drew from Hegel “Das Ganze ist das Wahre”. In the practical logistic strain of co-ordinating tasks for fresco production, we have a whole range of components for the whole, whose making have been set forth in the past and are rather difficult to be changed. The two lines of consistency: manual process and its doctrine artisanal excellence in crafts(wo)manship can maybe never be really reconciled or even brought to a stable equilibrium with the

necessities of a more conceptional evolvment based on a radicality of innovation akin to Walter Sickert's refutation of all manners, his constant drive to see everything afresh and capture it anew. Sickert himself, though comfortably posing as a suitor (he was perhaps more professionally a suitor than ever a painter, owing much of his fame and income to his much elder wife and intimate acquaintances alongside) of Degas in a bourgeois isolation under the postulate of art-pour-art, could in fact never even proceed to finish more than tentative sketches for even a mere tempera decoration to a single dining room and thus prominently failed a major private order. His manual doctrine to work everything anew clang to the instruction to let every layer get "bone dry", which was formulated in such a close-to-military rigour a vivid reflection of the cruelty of British colonial operations of his surroundings financing his work. Transparent hues akin to fresco layering are by far more operational and stretchable in their possibilities than in aquarelle or oil/tempera painting ever can achieve due to material processes thus activated. Hues are applied practically without any glue added. Transparent lime water moves so very similar to pure water on the painting surface that there is, lighter even than in aquarelle glue painting, no impediment to the free allocation of pigments on the painting ground. Their liaisons rely on the carbonizing of top layers to any hue by merging physically and chemically with as much as over the top of the painting ground. This process is far ripened already within about 600 seconds allowing to re-pass any hue with another, e.g. contrary perception without destroying the previous traces of uniquely characteristic manual touch because carbonisation preserves the immediacy and artisanal patina as a crystallising under-paint. Furthermore, the basis of the

painting whitens continually over the following half year. Every change of moisture is enhancing a more light underpinning to the colours. This emboldens after some trial observations to go for extreme hues, especially using freely applied hydrated lime itself in the second part of realisation at Correias from day shift 4 to 6.

This richness of expressive means can to a certain degree be channelled into a relay race planning process from day shift to day shift. Basic parameters can thus be passed on while being taken up always on a more enhanced level by a following day shift. Only if planning was not able to enhance suitable pre-figuration in imaginative processes accompanying the painting, they fail to become evocative for a reader of figures done over different day-shifts assembling their components in an instant, in a swift movement of her or his eyes. I assume it is for the time being better to make such artisanal inconsistencies to conceptional overreach transparent, than to try to hide them. The cart wheel between day shift 3 and 5 assembled around the head of figure 35 (documented in its upper part of day shift 3 as no. 32. l), h) and j)) is such an example. In Romania at intervention no. 70 of September 2002, we first experimented with a simulated day shift break within one day's labour. The results were encouraging. An experience of making contradictions at least retraceable to keep them open for future discussion and measurement by critical eyes became a means of streaming contradictions and evolving them to arbitrary focal lines supportive of arguments to the overall composition. From day shift 3 at no. 132 onwards, first the inner (radius 1/3 of total wall height), then in shift 4-6 also the outer circle (radius 1/2) were subject to such painting breaks in simulation, entangling conscious breaks of colour association a certain simulated degree of awkwardness

in relay race parameter transmission and refusal to continue trifle caprices which were in a process of more critical reflection identified as not really carrying the overall argument.

The main preoccupations during the painting process were curiously enough of a distinct making by social interaction and controversial reasoning. Though being one at the brushes, discussion and the eyes of others were the most important means of visual production. I was, so I thought, alone at the brushes actually against my intention. That lasted until Oktobrinka took to hooliganising on her own account. First she attacked the under-plastering, then with the same spontaneous surety on the very top with a technically suitable (and un-washable, I tried it) warm cover to an environment (left arm of figure 45) I had previously repeatedly noted as actually terribly cold and aloof, though presumably populated by a bunch of lively kids, but rather unchangeable due to newly adopted doctrines of colour reduction to underpin simulated shift breaks along the two circle lines.

Following Masha's reflection on populating and over-crowding space after day shift one, I kept on being primordially pre-occupied by questions how to populate with figures which were more than just a crowd, just popular mass but real agents of their place in the overall tissue. I wanted only such strong characters who were able to break that tissue's forced consistency if need be. Hopefully that succeeded up to the labour gang pulling up the second barrel, fig. 29 down to fig. 20 (which itself is the only questionable figure. I discovered it as astronomers discovered planet Pluto in the 1920s which is by far not the last and not even the biggest of a whole cloud of outer planets at the lower fringe of planet size by today's knowledge). I wanted to have figures only supporting, never counter-acting the

creation of visual landscapes in depth of imaginative space (and time). Always preoccupied from Masha's comment onwards to fore-mostly create depth and free space for free individuals to lavish in, I took to levelling large parts into the landscape model we saw around us under the vivid horizon line: verticality levelled into arable plots, overgrown by grand arrogance of agro-industrial massive exploitation in a set of pine trees thrown over the exposed relief caprices of vertical local geology with the pretention of a rational grid guiding operations. Is this the promising merger of agriculture and industry hailed by Marx ("Capital" on Agricultural industry and progress (footnote no. 4 on grand machinery)) and just temporarily distorted to our eyes by private profit priorities and – comically enough - the factual absence of conditions for its realisation in most instances of our terribly short life? Hardly so.

finished writing at Correias, 7th may 2013